officials were detained and later released. Both officials have been suspended by the Ministry. Five other persons were also detained in the case.

Cultural Centres

3634. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals received for setting up of the cultural centres from the Indian Missions and Posts abroad and how many of those have been accepted;

(b) the number of the cultural centres set up during the last two years;

(c) whether the cultural centres in Washington has started functioning; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) 27 proposals for the setting up of new cultural centres have been received. These centres will be opened depending upon an assessment of their importance and the availability of funds. Presently, proposals for centres in Washington D.C. (USA), Suva (Fiji) and Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) are under consideration.

(b) One centre has been established at Dushanbe (Tajikistan) in December 2002 with the deputation of two teachers.

(c) No.

(d) An appropriate property for the centre is presently being identified for the purpose. Administrative and financial approvals are also being processed.

Projects in Bhutan funded by India

3635. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the mega projects in Bhutan which are being funded by Government along with the expenditure incurred on each project; and

(b) by when, these projects are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) and (b) At present there are three mega-projects under implementation in Bhutan which are funded by GOI.

1020 MW Tala Hydro-electric Project: This Project is scheduled for commissioning by September 2005. The approved cost of the Project is Rs. 3580 crores and is being funded on part Grant and part Loan basis. The loan is repayable in 12 equated annual instalments and carries an interest rate of 9% per annum. Repayment of principle and interest would become due upon commencement of commercial operation of the project. Almost all the electricity generated by the project will be exported to India through the Eastern Grid. The Project is progressing as per schedule.

Dungsum Cement Plant Project: The Project has two components: (i) The Dungsum Cement Plant at an approved cost of Rs. 300 crores and (ii) Associated Infrastructure at an approved cost of Rs. 100 crores. This is funded entirely by Government of India. Although the work on the main Cement Plant has been suspended due to prevailing difficult law and order situation in Eastern Bhutan, the work on related infrastructure is continuing. The infrastructure related work includes construction of Geleph-Tintibi-Nanglam transmission line (completed), constructiion of road from Pathsala (Assam) to Nangalam (Bhutan) and a Railway siding for the Cement Plant.

60 MW Kurichu Project: This Project has been recently commissioned. It was funded by Government of India on part Grant and part Loan basis at a total cost of Rs. 560 crores. The loan component is repayable in 24 equated half yearly instalments and carries an interest rate of 10.75% per annum. The first repayment would commence from the date of full evacuation of power from Kurichu Project.

Ranking in globalisation

3636. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India ranks below Pakistan, Bangladesh in globalization;